JUNE 1990

# GAYSPEAK

NEWSLETTER OF THE PIKES PEAK GAY COMMUNITY CENTER

P.O. BOX 574 COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80901 PHONE (719) 471-4429

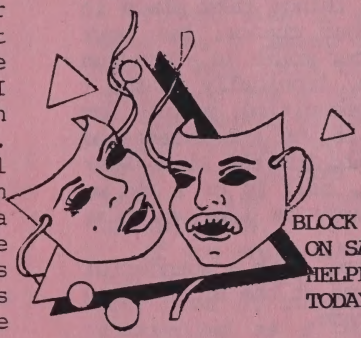
## From the President's Desk

With the upcoming Block Party 90', the Pride Parade and Pridefest in Denver, we are given opportunities to celebrate our lifestyles and share with the greater community, a part of our heritage that might hopefully enlighten and educate others in a positive manner. Once again I invite and urge you all to participate in the Block Party at the Exit, on June 16th. Our theme this year is Mardi Gras and will be carried over to the Pride Parade in Denver, on June 24th. We will march as a community behind a float sponsored by the United Court and decorated in a Mardi Gras theme by representatives from many groups in the community. In thinking of the parade, I feel it is very important to be there and be counted. If you are not comfortable with the thought of being recognized you can always wear a mask, after all it is "Mardi Gras". We live in a society and time that puts a lot of faith in statistics. In considering this we have to realize being counted can only benefit us all.

In 1985 Helpline coordinator Alan Wakefield approached the Center board with the idea of the helpline sponsoring a block party to benefit the Center. For three months the helpline members planned, worked on, and publicized the block party: Alive with Pride in '85'. This was the beginning of an annual event which has become a tradition to be proud of within our community.

In February of this year Alan Wakefield passed away from AIDS. This years Block Party '90: A Mardi Gras is being loving dedicated to Alan for the love and joy he has given to us. Please participate and join us in celebrating a culture that exemplifies a history of pride and perserverance.

Thank You,
Ed Sells
President/P.P.G.C.C.



BLOCK PARTY 90' T-SHIRTS ON SALE NOW !!! CALL THE HELPLINE AND GET YOURS TODAY !!! $12.00 EACH

### PERFORMERS NEEDED

We believe that our community has a wealth of talented people. We would like to offer you an opportunity to share your talent with the community at large.

On Saturday, June 16, 1990, the Pikes Peak Gay Community Center is hosting a Block Party at the Exit Lounge. in addition to booths for vendors and plenty of food and drink, entertainment is being scheduled from 12:00 - 6:00pm. Volunteer performers and performing groups are needed as well as individuals willing to help with some of the Center's booths.

If you or your group is interested in helping out, please call David Eidson 473-7794 and leave your name and phone number, so a scheduled time may be set up for your performance.

SEE YOU AT THE BLOCK PARTY!!!

## FROM THE VICE PRESIDENTS CORNER

Its summer again, and the Community Center has a lot planned for us all to get together and have some fun. June 16th, Pikes Peak gay Community Center is hosting the annual Block Party, at the Exit Lounge parking lot. from 11:00am to 6:00pm. Then we have the Gay Pride Parade in Denver on June 24th. The Centertainers have a benefit show on July 28th at the Hide and Seek. We are looking at putting a simple picnic together in the mountains, for sometime in July or August.

While you are thinking about all the things you are going to be doing this summer. Why not think about running for an office in P.P.G.C.C.. This year in October we will be holding our Board Elections. The seats of President and vice-president are up for election. I have heard people speaking their mind about how they would like to see certain things take place in the Center. Nows your chance, put your involvement where your mouth is - and run for a Board position. Ironically Ed and I are in charge of recruiting people for Board positions. So if you are interested in serving on the Board for the Pikes Peak Gay Community Center, call Ed or I and we will be more then happy to give you more information.

Thanks for your time, have a wounderful summer, hope to see you at the Block Party and the Gay Pride Parade.

David Eidson,
Vice-President/P.P.G.C.C.

*Yvonne*
of
**HAIRCUTS AT THE DEPOT**
76 S. Sierra Madre
Downtown Colorado Springs
635-8422

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

For over the past two months, the Pikes Peak Gay Community Center has been compiling information on dealing with gay youths and how various Youth Groups around Colorado operate. In these two months various comments have been made as to why the center is so slow on its course to sponsor a youth oriented group. The Pikes Peak Gay Community will not chair, co-sponsor, or recognize any groups involving minors until the Center has assured itself that first there will be no recourse or legal ramifications against the Center while dealing with Youths that could jepardize the status of the Center or its non-profit structure.

Secondly the Center will not recognize or allow a youth oriented group under its structure without protecting the saftey of the minors involved which would mean acredited counselors, restricted meetings and meetings or sessions involving two or more staff. The Center must not only protect its standing in the community, both heterosexual and homosexual, but it must also protect the youths it will one day foster and look to for leadership. This leadership can only be accomplished with strong, solid and capable adults. Please do not rush the Center into any endeavor that could later harm its ability to help this community by creating and implimenting projects such as this.

Respectfully,
Kevin Conboy, seceratry/P.P.G.C.C.

### P.L.W.A.

The community worked together and showed their support once again. The second annual P.L.W.A. shows netted over $4970.00. Friends and supporters came from all over to help Barb and Cher put this benefit together. Their were over thirty donations from heterosexual business here in Colorado Springs. And that we can give a big thanks to Mary, from Fancy Lady, in Old Colorado City.

The start was a little slow this year and a few of us didn't know if we were really going to make the goal of $4000.00. As time went on - the donations started to come in. The phones started to ring off the wall with people wanting to do their part for this effort.

Barb and Cher would like to thank The Exit Lounge and True Colors for their hard work in raising donations in the jugs. On the last day of the race to see which bar could raise the most money, those two bars were racing neck to neck with each other.

The Exit Lounge won the Jug Contest.

Many thanks go out to all the people who performed in the shows, the people who worked behind the scenes like Ed, the door man at The Hide and Seek. Randy Toddish, Rick Brown, Kevin Conboy and so many more. Thanks to Danny Entler for working all the auctions. Chris and Tracy for emceeing, D.L. for helping with the lights. Again there are just to many wounderful people to mention them all here.

Barb and Cher would like to thank the community for all their love and support with this annual P.L.W.A. benefit.
(David Eidson, Editor)
(Editor's note: If you would like information to where the money is going, and the break down on the collection of the monies. stay tuned to the up coming Gayspeak Newsletters.)

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SHUTTLE RIDE TO
GAY PRIDE PARADE
JUNE 24th

The Hide and seek is offering shuttle rides to the Denver Gay Pride Parade, on June 24th, 1990. For more information call 634-9303. The best time to call would be during the day if possible.

Please tell them you saw this notice in Gayspeak.

**MODERN BOOKS**
2727 N. Nevada ● Colorado Springs, CO 80907
**Phones: (719) 634-0984 & 634-9545**

ADULT
VIDEOS-MAGAZINES-TOYS,ETC.
Don Silvey,mgr.David"G"Asst.
Bobby H.,Assoc. Jeff L.,Assoc.
HOURS:Mon.-Sat.9:00am-12 Midnight
Sunday 9:00am thru 11:00pm

ATLANTIS COMMUNITY, INC.
1120 N. Circle Drive Suite 16B

Atlantis Community, Inc. is sponsoring a **FUN RUN** on September 9th, from 10:00am till 3:00pm at Otis Park.

If you wish to participate, they will send you a packet of pledge forms. There are 20 mail forms in the packets. They can also send you a set of walk around forms if you wish to go door to door.

All runners will receive a FREE T-SHIRT. For another prize you may do 20 laps. Also, there will be FREE REFRESHMENTS.

If you would like your LOGO on the form you must commit to 25 runners. If you do not have 25 runners, you will still be recognized as a participant. They would appreciate it if you could have two runners to help us register.

There will be a meeting shortly after we receive the form packets. At that meeting you will receive the packets and more information. They ask that you try to return the completed packets to ATLANTIS within two weeks from the date you received the packets.

Your organization or group will receive 50% of the proceeds from your sponsors after all costs have been subtracted. You can expect your check, along with a report listing all sponsors by December 1, 1990.

For more information please call Anita Cameron at 520-9511.
(Editor's note: This is a great way to show your support for other minority organizations in our community and make money too! Anita has also stated that you do not have to run the laps, you may walk, roller skate, etc...)

PIKES PEAK GAY COMMUNITY CENTER
TREASURERS REPORT
APRIL 3, TO MAY 11,1990
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY
CHER PENNINGTON

| | | GENERAL FUND | P.L.W.A. FUND |
|---|---|---|---|
| BEGINNING TOTAL ASSETS | | $1417.43 | $152.86 |
| CHECKS PAID OUT | | | |
| 5-07-90 | #1024 DAVID EIDSON REIMBURSEMENT | | |
| | BLOCK PARTY EXP. | 24.11 | |
| | GAYSPEAK PUBLISH. & MAIL 4/90 | 89.65 | |
| | GAYSPEAK PUBLISH. & MAIL 5/90 | 133.24 | |
| | CENTER'S RUBBER STAMP | 12.40 | |
| 5-11-90 | CLOSE OUT AMERICAN FEDERAL SAVINGS | 1.13 | |
| 5-07-90 | #1027 UNIV. OF COLO. | | |
| | WORK SHOP | 150.00 | |
| 5-08-90 | TRANSFERRED FUNDS TO | | |
| | COVER P.L.W.A. BENEFIT EXP. | 49.14 | |
| 5-10-90 | #1025 NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN | | |
| | TASK FORCE-DONATION | 25.00 | |
| 5-10-90 | #1026 AIDS DONATION-RENT | 185.00 | |
| 5-10-90 | #1028 THE UNITED COURT, LAMBDA | | |
| | HOUSE-YARD BENEFIT | 25.00 | |
| TOTAL PAID OUTS | | 694.67 | |
| DEPOSITS | | | |
| 4-11-90 | TWO MEMBERSHIPS | 12.00 | |
| | GAYSPEAK ADDS. | 40.00 | |
| | SALE OF DESK | 20.00 | |
| | HARVENA JAYE SHOW TIPS | | 15.00 |
| 4-23-90 | ONE MEMBERSHIP | 6.00 | |
| | ONE DONATION | 14.00 | |
| | GAYSPEAK ADDS | 65.00 | |
| 4-28-90 | P.L.W.A. PRE-BENEFIT DONATIONS | | 131.45 |
| 4-30-90 | P.L.W.A. JUG CONTEST | | 64.73 |
| | CENTERTAINERS SHOW & TIPS | 160.00 | |
| | GAYSPEAK ADDS. | 70.00 | |
| 5-08-90 | TRANSFERRED FUNDS TO P.L.W.A. BENEFIT | | 49.14 |
| 5-09-90 | P.L.W.A. JUG CONTEST | | 76.50 |
| 5-11-90 | CLOSING OF FEDERAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS | .88 | |
| 5-11-90 | AIDS DONATION-RENT | 185.00 | |
| TOTAL DEPOSITS | | 572.88 | 336.82 |
| ENDING CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCES | | 1295.64 | 489.68 |
| BOTH LINES | | 1785.32 | |

THANK YOU
RANDY TODDISH
FOR BEING A SPECIAL FRIEND
AND FOR ALL THE WORK YOU DID
DURING THE P.L.W.A. SHOWS
LOVE BARB AND CHER

## NOTE TO OUR COMMUNITY

You may notice an expenditure in our treasure's report for the sum of $150.00 to the University of Denver. This money was used to send our Vice-President to a Grant Writing Seminar. The Board of the Pikes Peak Gay Community Center, voted on sending David Eidson to learn more about grants, how they can work for us, and in general how to write a grant that will be awarded payment. David came back with a lot of information and we are certain this information will help us to receive more grants in the future for the Center.

If at any time you as a paid member of the Pikes Peak Gay Community Center, do not agree on how the Board has decided to spend the Center's money, you may attend our Center meetings and voice your opinion on the subject. All Center meetings are open to the community. They are on the third Tuesday of each month, at Sacred Heart School, at 7:00pm. Call the Helpline for more information. 471-4GAY.

DO YOU HAVE UNWANTED RUMAGE? WOULD YOU LIKE IT HAULED OFF? CALL 593-9606

## HELPLINE 471-4429

**The helpline is in need of your help. They need volunteers to give about 6-8 hours a month of their time.**
Current Helpline hours are 6-9pm Monday through Friday, and 3-5pm on Saturdays.
The Helpline is another great source in reaching out to our gay and lesbian friends. Please help us continue serving our community. Call 471-4429 **(471-4GAY)**

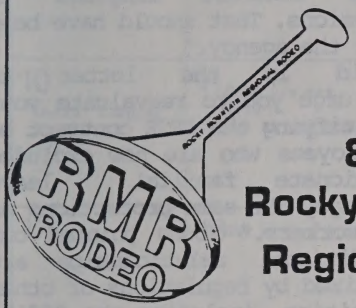
## SURVEY FINDS LONG-LASTING LESBIAN/GAY COUPLES

A national survey of 1,749 lesbian and gay couples found relationships averaging nearly six years in length, even though the average respondent was only 35 years old. More than 100 couples had passed their 15th anniversary. The statistics are research begun in 1988 by **Partners Newletter For Gay & Lesbian Couples.**

"We were overwhelmed by the enormous number of couples who were eager to have their relationships better understood," said Stevie Bryant, who edits and publishes the bimonthly newsletter with

# Colorado Gay Rodeo Association

presents




## 8th Annual Rocky Mountain Regional Rodeo

## June 30, July 1 & 2, 1990

**C.G.R.A.'s Southern Colorado Satellite's Calendar of Events**

**Wed., May 30th — 9 p.m. — Exit**
Show to benefit C.G.R.A., C.S.

**Sun., June 3rd — 11 a.m.**
**Monument Valley Park North**
A Potluck Picnic - Everyone is welcome
— Just bring a dish to share.
For Info. Call: (719) 576 - C.G.R.A.

IF YOU WANT TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP WORK THIS YEAR'S RODEO — *WE NEED YOU!*

For Information Call (303) 839-8810

(Beer Tent, Ticket Sales, Registration, Arena, Security, Etc.)

*While in Denver!*

Mr. C's

Your place to Party

**Tuesday Thru Sunday**
Dance & Party To A Live DJ

**Monday, Tuesday & Thursday**
Prime Time Draft 7 - Close
25¢ Glass & $1.25 Pitcher

**Wednesday**
Free C/W Dance Lessons 8 - 9 P.M.
$1 Simpatico Beer

**Thursday**
Free Darts 8 - Close

**Friday, Saturday & Sunday**
Ladies Choice Specials 5 - 8 P.M.
50¢ Well, Domestic Beer, Shots of Schnapps and Sodas!

**Sunday**
Free C/W Dance Lessons 6 - 7 P.M.
Free Pool 8 - Close

**C's Happy Hour**
Every Day 4 - 8 P.M.

7900 E. Colfax, Denver
(303) 322-4436

Where There's never a cover.
Bring your I.D., please.

his 10-year-partner Demian.

"The longevity we found in these relationships will surprise even the gay community," noted Demian, "and it could help policy makers understand the significance of our often ignored and trivialized families."

The survey noted longer relationships among men than women. Lesbian couples had been together an average of 4.9 years, while male couples averaged 6.9 years. Although male respondents averaged nearly two years older than lesbians, the difference does not fully account for the variation in relationship longevity.

A free summary of the survey results may obtained by sending the publication a self-addressed, stamped, business-sized envelope. A detailed analysis is being compiled for the May/June issue of **Partners Newsletter for Gay & Lesbian Couples.** Copies of this issue may be ordered for $3.95.

After the special survey issue, the newsletter will return to its usual format of couples interviews, news and information. A year's subscription to the newsletter costs $21.00.

Send requests, and payment if required, to **Partners,** Box 9685, Seattle, WA 98109. Telephone inquiries may be made to Stevie Bryant or Demian at (206) 784-1519.

### HUD CHIEFS SHUN FAMILY LEAVE PROVISION; NGLTF CHALLENGES ANTI-GAY STANCE

The two top officals of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently denounced a labor contract that would extend domestic partnership benefits to the federal agency's Gay and Lesbian employees.

Jack Kemp, Secretary of HUD, along with Under Secretary Alfred a. DelliBovi, claimed the contract with the HUD employee union illegally "redefines the family." The National GAy and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) has sharply criticized the HUD officals, and has sent a stronly-worded letter to DelliBovi urging him to reconsider his position.

DeklliBovi, in an article in The Washington Post on December 5, stated,"...(HUD is)... not going to ratify a contract which redefines the family to include non-traditional living arragements. We believe such provisions are illegal."

The controversy was sparked by a clause in the contract of the American Federation of Goverment Employees (AFGE). AFGE's proposed definition of "family" would provide Lesbian and Gay employees with familial leave benefits identical to the privileges already offered heterosexual workers.

Ivy Young, director of NGLTF's Family Project, commented,"It's unfortunate that the immediate reaction to the AFGE contract from HUD's top officals has been so narrow-minded. HUD negotiators had approved the contract language in bargaining sessions. That should have been sufficient for the agency."

Young said in the letter to DelliBovi,"We urge you to reevaluate your position on ratifying the AFGE contract so those HUD employees who are now excluded from compassionate familial leave benefits may enjoy the same protections as their fellow workers." Young pointed out that non-traditional relationships are already recognized by regulations of other government entities, including the Office of Personnel Management. Last year, the New York State Court of Appeals in a housing case ruled that the definition of a family member "...should not rest on fictitious legal distinction or genetic history, but instead should find its foundation in the reality of family life."

Commenting on the role of the union in advocating for Gay and Lesbian employees, Young said,"As we move in the '90s, the issue of benefits discrimination in the work place will become even more prominent unions must play an important role in fighting that discrimination. AFGE's commitment to all the people it represents is significant. Too often when contract negotiations get tough, our issues are the first to be thrown off the table. AFGE seems determined to fight this one out, and that's commendable."

NGLTF is tracking domestic partnership issues in federal, state and local agencies as part of its Families Project. NGLTF encourages Lesbians and Gay to write HUD and urge the department to include Gays and Lesbians in its familial leave policy. Write: The Honorable Alfred A. DelliBovi, Under Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, washington, D.C. 2041[illegible].

# 19 JUNE 90

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Notes: For any information, Please contact 471-4GAY.<br>Court- United Court Rising Sun Empire<br>SOS - Sisters of Sapho<br>CGRA - Colorado Gay Rodeo Assoc. Colorado Springs<br>SCAP - Southern Colorado AIDS Project<br>PPGCC- Pikes Peak Gay Community Center<br>CGLTF- Colorado Gay&Lesbian Task Force<br>Unite'- Social Group for Couples and Singles | | | | | 1 HIV+ mtg 5:30<br>Gay AA mtg 8:00<br>Womyn's Theatre<br>"8X10 GLOSSY"<br>8:00; $6.00 | 2 Gay AA mtg 8:00<br>Womyn's Theatre<br>"8X10 GLOSSY"<br>8:00; $6.00<br>Court Show |
| 3 CGRA Picnic 11:00<br>SOS Picnic<br>Court mtg 1:00 | 4 Gay AA mtg 8:00 | 5 | 6 | 7 BOA mtg 7:00<br>SOS mtg | 8 Gay AA mtg 8:00<br>HIV+ mtg 5:30<br>Unite' Camping Trip | 9 Lyda's 2nd Torn Levi Contest 10:00<br>Gay AA mtg 8:00<br>Unite' Camping Trip |
| 10 Unite' Camping Trip | 11 CGRA c/s mtg 7:30<br>Gay AA mtg 8:00 | 12 SCAP mtg 7:00<br>Helpline mtg 6:30 | 13 Unite' mtg | 14 SOS mtg<br>FLAG DAY | 15 HIV+ mtg 5:30<br>Gay AA mtg 8:00 | 16 Block Party 11:am-6:pm<br>Pridefest Show 9:pm-2:am<br>Court Show<br>Gay AA mtg 8:00 |
| 17<br>FATHER'S DAY | 18 Gay AA mtg 8:00 | 19 PPGCC mtg 7:00 | 20 Buddy Program mtg | 21 SOS mtg<br>SUMMER BEGINS | 22 HIV+ mtg 5:30<br>Gay AA mtg 8:00 | 23 Court Show<br>Gay AA mtg 8:00 |
| 24 PRIDEFEST'90 Parade 11:am<br>CGLTF Rally12:am | 25 Gay AA mtg 8:00 | 26 | 27 Unite' mtg | 28 SOS mtg | 29 Gay AA mtg 8:00<br>Rocky Mt. Regional Rodeo | 30 Gay AA mtg 8:00<br>SCAP Garage Sale<br>Rocky Mt.Regional Rodeo |

## REMEMBERANCES OF THINGS PAST...

The end of a decade provides an occasion to do retrospecitives on the past and pronouncements for the future. Itis an opportunity that comes perhaps only seven times in any single lifetime. It is sometimes gratifying but most of only humerous to look back on such pronouncements to see how they fit into the realities of the future, from thet future.

Reflection and retrospection should be a daily experience, not something that comes at the end of any year, or decade or even century. Such reflection and retrospection, when used on a regular basis, can help us to put our lives into perspective. When done only once every ten years we tend to live rather frantic lives in which we believe we are progressing but that progress is often only a repetition of past historical ocurances. Lesabians and Gays, most specifically, need to contemplate their status often. It should become in essence a religion.

We as people are confronted on an almost daily basis with problems and life decisions that are non-condusive to a stress free lifestyle. Like a meteor entering the atmosphere, many of us burn ourselves out at early ages.

Part of that is due to our inability to perceive of our cultural and individual places in history. We are taught to believe from an early age that we are a societyless people and as a result we do not place ourselves into the perspectives of history until we are confronted by the end of a particular priod of time. The lesson to be learned, if we ever hope to really achieve our collective goals what ever we determine them to be, is that we need to be culturally aware all of the time. It is a proven formula that has managed to provide an inner stregth for Jews, Gypsies, African-Americans and countless other minorities throughout ages of persecution.

We have that cultural basis but we do not use it. We banter the words history, culture and society about; but without any real conviction that they apply to us as individuals. We have let others dicate our cultural awareness for so long that we have difficulty perceiving ourselves as more than simple individuals. Then, when confronted by daily prejudice, the feeling of aloneness that we grew up with, come crowding back into our individual lives.

To die at the hand of others is a terrifing thing, under any circumstances. To die alone holds its own special fears and pain. Lesbians and Gays go even further, we create for ourselves a cultural vacuum in which we have no past and therefore no future. We exist in the chronological minute that is our individual life and passionately resist the concept that we are part of the greater historical presence of all Gays and Lesbians. It is not a mystery, only sad, that some of us, like Liberace, deny our sexuality even to our death beds. We perceive of ourselves as not being a part of society and leave ourselves with no other reference point for our lives. We create a spiritual despair by denying the cultural we are a part of and desperately seeking to become part of a society in which we do not fit.

The ability to define the human spirit is not yet an accomplishment of humanity. Yet there exists a comfort in the knowledge that we have in truth never really been alone. A comfort that should be a reality to even the most individualistic of us. We resist that comfort because we are taught that our sexuality does not make us worthy of a cultural or historical identity.

We are first told that we should not exist. Then since our sexuality has determined that we are a "biological anomaly," we consider ourselves silly or feel like we are pretending if we talk about our culture or history. We accept the dogma that to be a cultural entity we need the criteria of race, religion, geographical location, language or any other human characteristic except sexuality. Our scholars are embarrassed to consider that concepts as sacred as history and culture could be based on sexual perference. Once again we trap ourselves in that spiritual despair. We are proud of who we are individually and do not wish to diminish that by seeming silly or foolish in someone else's opinion.

Just as we take joy in discovering someone else is of our sexual persuasion so should we rejoice at the concept that we are part of a greater whole. Although it is enjoyable to look at the past and perdict the future itis of far greater worth to recognize our cultural essence and build on it for the future.

if we as Lesbians and Gays really want to be accepted as an equal partner in the panorama of human existence we need to expand our commitment beyond self pride to one of cultural pride. To constantly search for acceptance by culturals other then our own implies a lack of self worth. Gay/Lesbian pride must be more than accepting ourselves as worthy individuals. Self pride and self acceptance is a nessary part of the whole but the whole includes accepting both our past and our present as part of who we are.

Our past as with any people or nation is our foundation. The acceptance of our entire identity gives us that spiritual strength needed to meet our future regardless if that future be bright or dismal.

Our past is not just and American or African past it is a Gay/Lesbian past which contains elements of many peoples and cultures but still specifically our past.

As we enter the new Gay 90's let us not look back just ten years but rather ten thousand years. Let us draw strength and comfort from the Lesbians and Gays who have gone before us. Let us honor our ancestors and our customs. Then acceptance by others will lose its power over us and it will become a reality without our asking. We will be our own strength and we will leave a legacy that will endure throughout time for the countless generations of Lesbians and Gays yet to be born.
(GAZE/USA)

**COUPLES SAY THEY"LL COME OUT TO CENSUS**

Millions of gay and lesbian couples could be counted by the 1990 U.S. Census if the couples selected the "unmarried partner" option to describe their relationship. An overwhelming majority of couples may have done so, judging from responses to a reader survey conducted by **PARTNERS: the Newsletter For Gay & Lesbian Couples.**

Of the 96 couples responding to the mid-

March survey, 92 said they would declare themselves as "unmarried partners." Only four plannned to keep their relationship secret.

"Of course, this small survey cannot accurately predict how all American couples will respond," said **PARTNERS** co-publisher Stevie Bryant. "However, we have reason to believe that the respondents are fairly typical of couples nationwide."

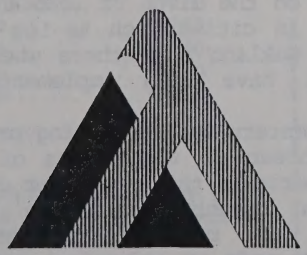
The respondents reside in 30 states, and have been together an average of 6½ years, ranging from less than one year to 23 years. Female couples accounted for 53 percent of the responses.

"Our readers strongly identify as couples," Bryant added, "but by no means are all of them visible as couples in their communities. For example, some feel it necessary to confirm that our newsletter is mailed in an opaque envelope for privacy."

**Legal gay marriage in high demand**

In response to another survey question, 81 percent of the couples said they would be legally married if the option were available. Until same-sex marriage is available, union ceremonies are a popular option. Thirty-one percent of the couples have had such a ceremony and 26 percent plan one.

**PARTNERS** is a subscription newsletter featuring interviews of committed couples, and news and information about couples issues, such as domestic partnership, court rulings, and gay marriage. The four-year-old newsletter recently announced it will lower its annual subscription rate from $36 to $21. Formerly an eight-page monthly, the newsletter now will include 16 pages and be published six times a year.
(Partners/The Newsletter for Gay & Lesbian Couples)



**Pikes Peak Gay Community Center**

**THE GENDER COMMUNITY**
**Where Are We Going In The Nineties?**
by Wendy Parker

The fact that we are all here today (at the convention) is testament to the fact that we do exist as a group in whatever numbers that one might care to debate. We may be extremely small in number or perhaps the tip of the iceberg. in either case, one thing is very clear: The fear, isolation, hiding in the closet, and self-loathing of recent years is not a viable alternative in a time where so many other social events of the last fifty years have actually led us here today.

Where are we going in the nineties depends largely on the recognition of a need for public awareness of us in our many forms and individuals goals along the gender spectrum.

The key word toward advancing goals in our community is 'involvement'. This is a subject that Merissa Sherrill Lynn (IFGE Executive Director) and others have promoted for years. She and a small staff at IFGE, along with a handful of other movers and shakers around the country, have struggled to keep the spirit of involvement alive.

All of you here came to the realization at some point that your gender preference was more than just a passing fancy. You may have wrestled with this issue since you were five or ten years old through various purges, numerous breakups in relationships, self doubt, and depression. You probably know that this is an issue that won't go away. To quote a popular Broadway musical,"I am what I am!"

We should not lapse into a false sense of complacency, thinking that society will somehow avoid excluding us from the same forms of discrimination as with other issues like race, sex, and sexual preference.

Only recently the issue was brought before Congress in the form of the Senate Ameendment number 722 to the 'Americans with Disabilities Act'. If you weren't aware of this by now, it basically lumped transsexuals, tranvestites, and gays along with child molesters, drug addicts, and compulsive sex offenders. The confusion that exists in the muddied thinking of small minded, unenlightened politicans confuses issues of free gender choice (which harms no one) with criminal elements of society that would violate someone else's civil rights. If an active

campaign to educate the public is not made, we will all certainly pay the price for our complacency down the road.

The need for aware gender community involement, networking, and outreaching has been catalyzed by the creation of the IFGE Congress of Representatives (which has never been more needed than it is today). In order to suppress seeds of possible bigotry and discrimination in the future, you have to become involved with the rights of all your sisters before you are locked out of your just rights in a democratic society. Senate Amendment 722 was snuck in at the last minute before passage with little or no debate in the U.S. Senate. Unbeknownst to other Senators, it was sent on to the House of Representatives where it is currently under consideration. Upon learning of this situation, i and many others sent letters to numerous political representatives. I received elsbrate, concerned and polite replies. When I made mention of this extremely important event to many sisters in our community, I was surprised to find an apathy toward the whole matter. I would remind all of you of the words of one early American revolutionary patriot, "If we don't all hang together, we will certainly all hang separately."

One only has to look at the insidiously gradual discrimination of gays, jews, and political dissenters in the Nazi Germany of the thirities and the complacency of most as neighbors turned their eyes to avert seeing the truth. As friends and relatives were being rounded up, they were forced to wear pink triangles or stars of David, and sent off to Nazi death camps. Bertren Russell said that, "Those who are unaware of history are doomed to relive it." And political and social discrimination is very real today, even in a democratic society such as ours.

The time to make our existence as a community known is now. The time to make a statement as to who we are is now. The time to state our goals as a group is now. The time is ripe because the questions of gender preference and gender issues are being catapulted into the limelight of public recognition through various media and has given us an opportunity which we should not lose.

Talk shows like Donahue, Sally Jesse Raphael, Geraldo, and countless local television programs have created some public awareness. Films like 'The World According to Garp','Tootsie', and plays like 'M Butterfly" amongst others, stimulated public curiosity. Even a recent issue of Newsweek brings this previously hidden issue out in the open and to lose this opportunity now would place our community back into the dark ages and a dark closet.

## WESTSTERN UNION CORP. LOSES $350,000 LESBIAN AND GAY ACCOUNT GROUP CITES COMPANY'S OPPOSITION TO SAN FRANCISCO LESBIAN AND GAY ORDINANCE

The Human Rights Campaign Fund, the nation's largest lesbian and gay political organization, today announced that it will no longer use Western Union Corp. to deliver "Speak Out" constituent messages to Capitol Hill, a decision that will cost the communications firm $350,000 this year.

In addition, the Campaign Fund announced that it will encourge other organizations and individuals throughout the country to reexamine their business relationship with Western Union.

Tim McFeeley, executive director of HRCF, stated that the decision "to terminate our relationship with western Union is based on the company's continued efforts to overturn a twelve year old San Francisco ordinance protecting lesbians and gays from discrimination."

"We want to send a clear message to Western Union," McFeeley said. "Lesbian and gay Americans do not intend to spend their money with an organization that is fighting to deny our rights to live free from discrimination."

McFeeley indicated that Western Union's efforts to overturn the San Francisco ordinance could have far reaching implications for gay rights ordinances throughout California."This case will have an impact on the lives of lesbian and gay Americans in cities such as Los Angeles, Berkeley, Oakland and others where local ordinances have been implemented," he stated.

"What Western Union is doing presents a greater threat to the rights of lesbian and gay Americans than any other corporate action in recent memory. We have no intention of remaining silent while efforts are made to undermine protections that lesbian and gay Americans have fought so long to achieve," McFeeley stated.

The Campaign Fund's "Speak Out"

like crowds of men and women who brought down corrupt leaders in East Germany and Czechoslovakia. They can show that there who care, and that we are no longer willing to settle for business as usual.

Most anti-Gay comments arise out of mere heterosexism-- the unconscious bias that permeates our society. In such cases a straight- forward letter reminding people that we do exist and have feelings is often all it takes to trigger sincere apologies and greater sensitivity. We have to remember that those who make heterosexist comments are people who, like us, were raised in a society that reinforced a one-sided, negative view of homosexuality. Approaching such people with anger is usually inappropriate and can be counterproductive. The best approach, I think, is one of compassion and concern. By addressing our letters to a person's higher self, and by trying to help them see a wider view of the world, we can enrich their lives as well as make our own lives easier.

For the confirmed homophobes, those whose statements and actions arise out of hate and fear, we must remember that they deserve, at the least, our pity. Rather than simply returning the same anger they thrive on, we should keep in mind that these individuals are highly insecure. They may rely on homophobia and others forms of bigotry to promote a sense of self worth. Instead of responding to their hate we can simply expose their comments to the ridicule of others. The embarrassment we can generate will show them that people who hate are the true outsiders.

Another form of people power that will work for us is one on one - individuals reaching out to the other individuals in their lives.

I often hear Gay and Lesbian friends commenting that only this or that public figure would come out of the closet, straight society would have to rethink its prejudice against Lesbians and Gays. But it doesn't make sense for us to wait for our banner to be carried by celebrities, whose livelihood may be more dependent on mass popularity. We are own best ambassadors to friends, acquaintances and others we know. By making a conscious effort, with love and understanding, to be open with these people about our lives, we can help them deal with the stereotypes and prejudices with which we have all had to live.

If we are going to make this decade truly the Gay and Lesbian '90s, we are going to have to stand up and show our fellow human beings that we exist, that they need us, and that we love them. By letting those we meet and who care about us see us as whole human beings, and by making ourselves available to answer their questions, we can replace myth and stereotype with living truth. In other words, we can exercise true people power for change in our own lives.

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constituent mail program is the most successful grassroots mobilization effort in the history of the lesbian and gay rights movement. "Tens of thousands of lesbian and gay Americans have participated in the program," McFeeley stated."We are looking into the services provided by other vendors and will take our account to another firm," he said.

"We certainly hope that others will reexamine their business relationships with Western Union and any other organization which opposes full and equal rights for all Americans," McFeeley stated.

"Last year the Gallop Poll indicated that 71 percent of the American people oppose discrimination against lesbian and gay Americans in the work-place. I hope those people will take a close look at Western Union's efforts to destory the antidiscrimination protection that many cities offer to lesbian and gay Americans," McFeeley continued.

Last year, Western Union earned more than $80,000 from the Campaign Fund's "Speak Out" program which delivers preauthorized messages on lesbian and gay rights and AIDS issues to members of Congress. The program has been expanding rapidly, and the Campaign Fund anticipated spending at least $350,000 for Western Union's services this year. That figure was expected to continue incressing for several years into the future.

"We have had an excellent working relationship with them. That is why we made every effort to resolve this crisis through negotiations with the firm. The company was fully aware that the account was at risk if they continued to pursue their legal efforts against the ordinance. Now they will have to deal with the consequences," McFeeley continued.

Western Union is challeging the constitutionality of the San Francisco ordinance as part of legal battle which began last year. Armand Ertag, a Western Union employee in San Francisco, sought damages against the company for harassment and intimidation he experienced at work. Rather than address the specific allegations in Mr. Ertag's suit, Western Union has sought to have the gay rights ordinance overturned.

Steve Endean, director of the Campaign Fund's Field Division, also indicated that the group will discontinue its use of Western Union 800 number hotlines. These services allowed Campaign Fund supporters to call in their messages to members of Congress.

"Western Union has proved that it is not the best way to send constituent mail, it is the best way to send bigotry," said Endean.

(Human Rights Campaign Fund/News Release)

**PEOPLE POWER**

BY Rich Jennings

Specil from GAZE USA

A poerful force, capable of toppling tyrants and other forms of oppression, was put to dramatic use in the late '80s. That power- people power- enabled the people of the Philippines to end Marcos' illegitimate regime. In recent months in Eastern Europe, it has swept away the oppression of decades of one-party rule. And we can use it, too.

People power is an updated term for Gandhi's tactic of non-violent civil disobedience, which brought an end to colonialism in India, and inspired Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement of the '50s and '60s. It means taking a stand. It means joining together with others to show that an oppressive system no longer has legitimacy. I means facing down tyranny, be it military, political or social, in a graphic, human way.

Two forms of tryanny from which we suffer in our society are heterosexism and homophobia. Heterosexism is essentially an unconscious bias, perpetuated by ignorance about Lesbians and Gay men and our lives. The roots of homophobia are more complex, but what we experience is hatred and/ or value of Lesbians and Gay men.

It is time for us to end the tyranny of homophobia and heterosexism by showing they are illegitimate and based on an inaccurate world view. We can do this through people power- standing up and showing our fellow human beings that Lesbians and Gay men do exist and are an integral part of society.

People power can take different forms in different situations. In our culture, heterosexuality has been enshirined and homosexuality stereotyped by the media. GLAAD, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, exists to help our community deal effectively with the media.

Hundreds of letters generated in response to positive or negative media portravals of Gay men or Lesbians can work

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